

COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

CHILCOTT 

LUND 

THOMPSON 

TAYLOR (Clerk & Recorder)

Date.....March 31, 2005

Members Present.....Commissioner Greg Chilcott,
Commissioner Betty Lund and Commissioner Alan Thompson

Minutes: Glenda Wiles

The Board met with Planning Director Patrick O'Herren and Senior Planner Karen Hughes to discuss the large subdivision applications that are coming into their office. In the past Patrick has visited with the Commissioners on the time lines for these sufficiency reviews. He stated there are ways to deal with the amount of work in his office which includes contracting the work out or allowing the employees, who are already up to speed on the policies and procedures, to work overtime. Patrick stated a cursory look at what they might need for overtime would be 150-200 hours (in the amount of \$4,500.00). They would then be able to see where they are in regard to the subdivisions in process.

There was some discussion of the lack of money in the Planning budget and the \$12,000.00 within the Commissioners' budget under the General Un-programmed Costs (GUC) that was set aside for the flyover on the Positive Systems contract that will not be expended. Discussion included the amount of work the G.I.S. employees will need to do in order to bring the work that Positive Systems has done to certain specifications. Otherwise, the fly over images might not be able to be utilized. Discussion also included extra monies in the Commissioners litigation line.

Commissioner Lund made a motion to utilize up to \$6,000.00 of the Commissioners' budget from the GUC line for this overtime at which time the workload in the planning office will be re-accessed. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion and all voted "aye".

In other business the Board met with Ron Hale who is currently leasing the Old Leonardi Property near the airport for agricultural purposes. Ron is using the property for the production of hay and grazing for horses and cattle. It was noted the current lease for this ground is with Leonardi Farms Inc., and ends on December 4, 2006. Ron has a sub-lease with Leonardi Farms. Also present at this meeting was Airport Manager Red Caldwell.

Ron stated he would like to lease this acreage for another year allowing him one more full season. He would need to know if this meets with the Commissioners' approval within the next few weeks, as he has some plans for wheel line irrigation, fertilizing etc.

Red stated the F.A.A. allows the airport property to be utilized for agricultural purposes as long as certain grains are not planted to encourage birds.

Ron stated the field would not need to be plowed for another 2-3 years. He currently pays for the water delivery, plus he pays the lease fee to Mr. Leonardi. Ron stated he is willing to pay the county the same amount of lease monies that he currently pays Mr. Leonardi.

Commissioner Chilcott stated it is a benefit to the citizens to have this ground farmed and to keep the weeds down. He stated the amount of revenue the county could generate is also important and they do have the ability to see if other vendors would be interested in this property. Ron stated he has put quite a bit of money into this property to get the ground the way it is now.

Red stated the F.A.A. would require the lease amount to be at fair market value. He also felt the lease agreement could include language that would allow several months notice for lease termination. This would allow Ron to have his agricultural production through out the summer.

Commissioner Thompson stated as long as the county receives fair market value for the land he did not think there would be a problem with the lease. It was agreed the lease would need to be in compliance with the F.A.A., and to have legal review from Civil Counsel James McCubbin.

Ron suggested the Commissioners review the fair market value for the land, the old buildings and corrals. He will then review that revenue against what he currently pays and the value of his farming enterprises. Ron pays \$55.00 per acre for a total of \$5,500.00 (100 acres), and this includes the ability to hook into Mr. Leonardi's irrigation pump that is not on this property.

Red also reminded the Commissioners that Mr. Leonardi needs to remove the old steel and other scrap iron that is laying on the property before his lease ends.

There was some discussion of the possibility of developing a park on this property. It was agreed these plans would not come to fruition for a few years and extending the lease to Ron for another year would not have any impact on that park development.

There was some discussion of the weeds. Ron expressed concern about the weed management and any spray that might go onto the neighboring properties. The Board concurred that this is county property so Red can contact the Weed Department and have them review the weed management needs.

The Board advised Ron they will visit with James about entering into a lease with Ron for one year after the lease with Leonardi Farms Inc. terminates.

The Board met briefly with Environmental Health Director Theresa Blazeicevich and Civil Counsel James McCubbin relative to the abandoned trailers that have been put on county property at the Camp Three Pit by Jay Gasvoda. Both James and Theresa indicated the county needs to remove these trailers if Jay does not move them.

In other business the Board met with members of the Bitterroot Water Forum relative to the TMDL work on the Bitterroot River Mainstem. Present at this meeting was Environmental Health Director Theresa Blazeicevich, County Flood Plain Manager, Laura Forrest, Susan Key of the Bitterroot Water Forum, and Tri State Water Council Members Ruth Watkins and Diane Williams. The Tri State Water Council includes Washington, Idaho and Montana. The Water Council is a non profit organization that was formed twelve years ago when the Clean Water Act was implemented on the Clark Fork River.

Ruth explained that the TMDL stands for total maximum daily loads (of certain substances) into the Bitterroot River. The Bitterroot Water Forum has joined with the Tri State Water Council relative to the daily loading of substances into the river. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will be performing this study on the main stem of the river from Darby to the location of where the water dumps into the Clark Fork River. This document targets the review of the pollutants being loaded into the river. Ruth stated they review the daily load for certain pollutants and they now have a time line in to order to produce the document. New monitoring will take place to determine the levels of the tributaries, at which time they can find out the levels of discharge from the people that are upstream. Ruth indicated once this TMDL is in place they will see how it 'fits into the numbers'. She stated DEQ is assembling the assessment, and after that assessment DEQ will do the monitoring. In 2007, DEQ will develop the TMDL that will be allowed in the main stem and the tributaries. Ruth stated the Tri State Water Council wants to make sure the public is involved in this process, because DEQ is under a court order to perform this assessment and develop the load numbers. She stated DEQ does the technical work, and the Tri State Water Council is involved in the public input for water shed. Currently they are meeting with the key stake-holders for the discharge groups. After they hold those meetings, they will present the information to the state. She stated they would like to put together a committee to follow the information gathering process, particularly during the time of obtaining the target rates of the tributaries. She stated the local counties can then use the information for planning and environmental needs.

Susan stated it is important to keep the public apprised of this three-year study and help garner public participation in developing a plan. She stated there will be consultants in the valley this season taking water samples for the first phase of this project.

Commissioner Thompson stated the Fires of 2000 have caused concern over the sediment that has gone into the river. He agreed it is important to have a baseline for the river, and

public participation. However, he stated he does not want this project allowing some people to 'be too vocal' which will bog the project down. He indicated the county would welcome the opportunity to be a part of this project.

Commissioner Chilcott asked what the source of the restoration funding would be. Diane stated there are 319 Grant Programs available from the state but the grant process comes after the project is completed. She indicated if they identify the discharge point, that person who is causing or creating the discharge can apply for funds or a governmental agency can also apply for the grant funds in that person's behalf. She indicated the states are under a court ordered deadline, but the political reality is that people will be out of work until those TMDL's are completed. She agreed that public comment is needed, and agreed they do not want the process slowed down because of it.

Susan stated this project will provide the county with a great deal of information for planning and the environment. She stated the Bitterroot Water Forum and Tri State Water Council are working to make sure there is public participation in the TMDL project in Ravalli County. Commissioner Chilcott asked if there would be fiscal responsibility for this project for the county. Ruth stated that is a good question. Susan stated the Tri State Water Council has applied for publicity funding. Commissioner Chilcott stated it is important to have the data be scientific and not based on emotion. Susan agreed and stated that is why they are developing a public participation plan that benefits the project and not stall it.

Commissioner Chilcott asked what kind of say the public would have in the daily loading into the river. Diane stated DEQ must base their data on science. The public needs to understand that the fix from private lands comes from the private land owner and it is voluntary.

In other business, Commissioner Lund spoke at a Job Corp seminar relative to National Women's History Month.

The Board made a site visit at the Sunset Orchards No. 3, Block 8, Lot 44B AP Subdivision.